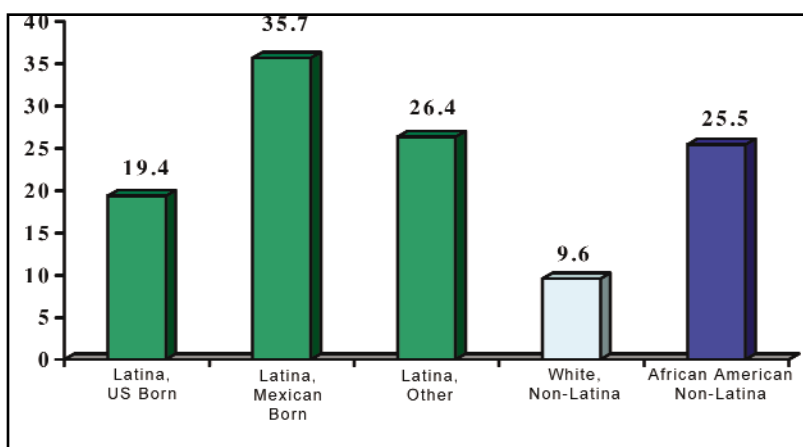


babies (Chart 4:2), which may partially explain why they have these positive birth outcomes. Between 1996-2000, 6.2% of babies born to Latinas in NC were classified as LBW, compared with 7.2% for whites and 13.8% for African Americans. These differences are consistent with national data, which document relatively low use of prenatal care and low incidence of LBW and very low birth weight (VLBW).<sup>3</sup>

**Chart 4:1**

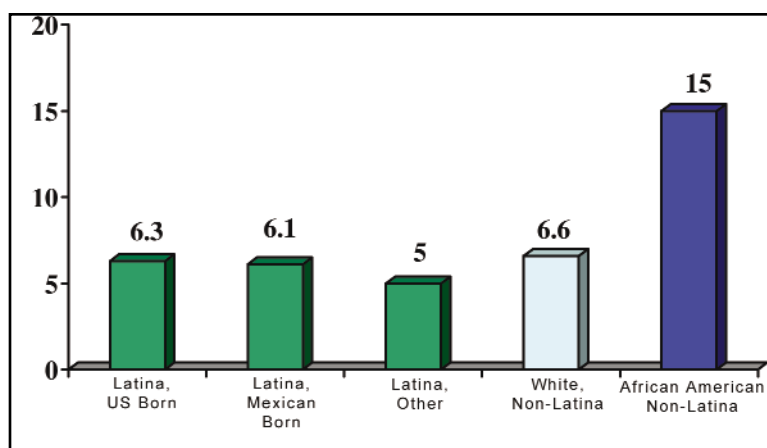
**Percent of North Carolina Women Who Started Prenatal Care After the First**



**Trimester (1996-2000)**

Source: Buescher P. State Center for Health Statistics. Presentation to NC Institute of Medicine Latino Health Task Force. June 12, 2002. Analysis of Birth and Infant Death Records (1996-2000).

**Chart 4:2**



**Infant Deaths Per 1,000 Live Births (1996-2000)**

Source: Buescher P. State Center for Health Statistics. Presentation to NC Institute of Medicine Latino Health Task Force. June 12, 2002. Analysis of Birth and Infant Death Records (1996-2000).

No one fully understands why Latina immigrants have such positive birth outcomes (often called "the Mexican Paradox"). Latinas, especially recent immigrants and those coming from Mexico, are less likely to have prenatal care, more likely to live in poverty, and less likely to report using a multivitamin with folic acid every day before pregnancy, but they are also less likely to engage in the